

Missouri Assessment Program
Spring 2006

Communication Arts

Released Items

Grade 7

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Directions

This passage is about a cat's visit to a veterinarian's office. Read the passage. Then answer Numbers 1 through 6.

Tiger's Tale

by Karla S. Rugh

I leaned over the front desk of the Santa Fe Veterinary Clinic, where I worked as a veterinarian, and tried to read the appointment book upside down.

"What's on for this afternoon, Kathy?" I asked our receptionist.

"Oh, the usual," she said. "Except for Tiger." She pointed to the cat carrier on the floor. "He needs his vaccinations.¹ Mrs. Johnson will pick him up about four-thirty."

"I'll get right to it," I said, a little puzzled. Vaccinating a cat was a "usual" type of case, and owners often left their pets with us for the day.

"You haven't met Tiger," Kathy continued as I reached for the carrier. "He hasn't been in since last year."

I paused. She sounded worried.

"Be careful, Dr. Rugh," she said. "Tiger hates vets."

A growl rumbled out of the carrier.

¹**vaccinations:** shots given to prevent illness

I took the carrier into an examination room and placed it on the table. While Beth, our technician,² got the vaccinations ready, I looked into the carrier.

A large tabby³ cat stared angrily at me.

"Hi, Tiger," I said, trying to be cheerful. "Are you a little nervous today? Don't worry—we'll get along just fine!"

Tiger growled.

I unlatched the carrier door, crooning⁴ softly to Tiger. He hissed loudly at me. His flattened ears, dark eyes, and fluffed-out fur made him look like a Halloween cat with stripes. Slowly, I reached into the carrier. With a howl, Tiger slashed at my hand! I jumped back, pulling my hand away just in time.

"All right, Tiger," I said. "Let's try something else." I tipped up the back of the carrier, hoping the cat would slide out the open door. When that didn't work, I tried jiggling the tilted carrier. A scrap of

²**technician:** a person with special training

³**tabby:** a cat with grayish stripes

⁴**crooning:** singing

Go On ►

blanket and some dry cat food slid out. Tiger didn't.

At this rate, Tiger would never get vaccinated. I considered putting on the thick leather gloves that we sometimes used to handle dangerous pets, but maneuvering⁵ heavily gloved hands inside the small carrier would be difficult.

I thought about putting a towel over Tiger to protect me from his claws and teeth. But I knew that this protection would be limited—an angry cat can wrestle out from under a towel rather easily. Besides, I didn't want to just snatch Tiger from his carrier—that would only make his attitude worse.

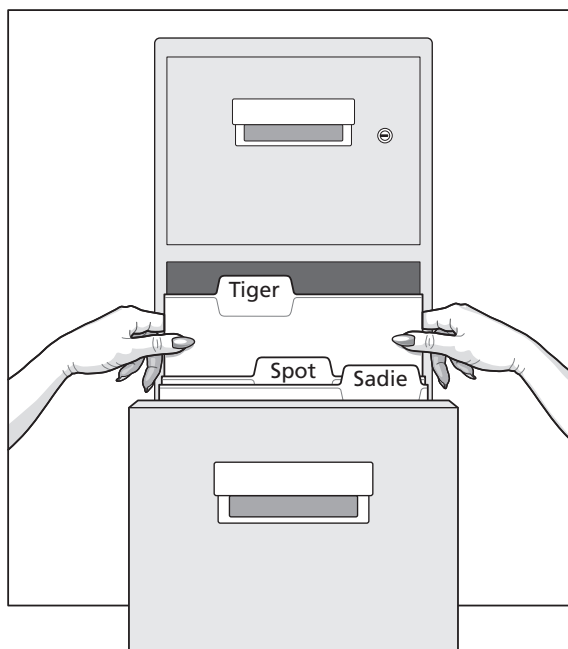
Kathy came in to tell me my first patient had arrived. I'd have to solve the Tiger problem later. I asked Beth to put Tiger and his carrier in a kennel⁶ in Ward A, where we put our patients who were staying only for the day. The ward would be peaceful and quiet—the only other patient there was an old gray cat who slept all the time.

I forgot about Tiger for a while as I tended to my appointments—two puppy exams, a Siamese cat with ear mites, a scratching basset

hound, and a sneezing parakeet. In between appointments, I checked my surgery cases from that morning and rebandaged a Labrador retriever's cut foot.

About four o'clock I crept into Ward A. Peeking around the corner, I found myself face to face with Tiger, separated only by the metal bars of his kennel door.

Tiger was out of his carrier! Beth must have opened the carrier before latching the kennel door. I thought fast—I needed to get Tiger out of the kennel, but if I reached for him too quickly he'd probably scurry right back into the carrier. So instead of trying to get him out, I strolled over to the record rack and picked out his case record. Then I leaned against the kennels and pretended to read.



⁵**maneuvering:** a movement that involves strategy and skill

⁶**kennel:** an enclosed area

Glancing sideways, I could see Tiger watching me. He didn't look like a Halloween cat anymore. His eyes weren't dark and wild—they were green and bright. I flipped through his record. I wanted him to think that I was very busy—too busy to pay attention to cats.

Tiger carefully inspected every inch of his kennel. Then he moved back to the door and stood there watching me. I started to hum as I continued reading.

"Meow," Tiger said quietly. I ignored him.

"MEOW," he said loudly. He rubbed his head on the kennel door.

Without looking, I reached up and put my hand on the door. My fingers were inches away from Tiger. I kept reading and humming—and tried not to think about what might happen if he decided to be nasty.

Suddenly I felt something cold touch my fingers! Resisting the urge to jerk my hand away, I looked up and saw Tiger sniffing it cautiously. Then I felt a small furry "bump" against my hand. Tiger was rubbing his head on my fingers!

"What's this?" I murmured. "Are you trying to make up with me?"

Tiger paused, then rubbed his head on my fingers again. Would he let me pet him? I opened the kennel door. Tiger backed away but soon came toward my open hand. I reached a finger toward his cheek and barely wiggled it in the fur. He cocked his head toward my finger. Inching my finger back behind his ear, I wiggled it again. Tiger leaned even more, asking for more scratching.

We talked some more and scratched some more. Soon he was letting me pet him on his back. By the time Mrs. Johnson arrived, Tiger and I were on our way to becoming good friends. Of course, he wasn't very happy to find out that his new friend was a veterinarian—especially when I vaccinated him—but he got over it. And even though we had become friends, when Tiger came to the clinic, HE was always the one who decided when it was time to come out of the carrier!

1 Which question would best guide a student who is researching the history of veterinarians?

- ☐ How old must a veterinarian be?
- ☐ When were veterinarians first licensed?
- ☐ What is the cost of going to veterinarian school?
- ☐ Why do people choose veterinary medicine as a career?

2 Read this paragraph from the passage.

“I forgot about Tiger for a while as I tended to my appointments—two puppy exams, a Siamese cat with ear mites, a scratching basset hound, and a sneezing parakeet. In between appointments, I checked my surgery cases from that morning and rebandaged a Labrador retriever’s cut foot.”

What is the most likely reason this paragraph is included in the passage?

- ☐ to explain the passage’s resolution
- ☐ to explain the passage’s main conflict
- ☐ to help the reader understand that time has passed
- ☐ to help the reader understand that the passage is almost over

- 3** Write an example of foreshadowing used in this passage. Explain why this is an example of foreshadowing.

Foreshadowing: _____

Explanation: _____

- 4** This passage includes many sensory words and phrases. Complete the chart with three words and/or phrases from the passage that appeal to the senses of hearing, touching, and seeing.

Sensory Words in “Tiger’s Tale”

Hearing	Touching	Seeing
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.

Go On ►

Imagine you are Dr. Rugh and you have been invited to speak to middle school students on Career Day about a typical day at the clinic. Write a letter to the principal of the school in which you explain what you will talk about to the students. Use three details and/or examples from the passage in your letter.

The image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

6

Predict what might have happened if Dr. Rugh had insisted on giving Tiger the vaccinations and not waited for the cat to become friendlier. Explain your prediction using two details and/or examples from the passage.

Prediction: _____

Explanation: _____

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STOP 

WRITING

Directions

Now you will write a paper in response to a writing prompt. First, read the prompt in the box below.

Then use the separate paper your teacher has given you for your prewriting activity (such as brainstorming, listing, freewriting, clustering, mapping, or drawing).

After you finish your prewriting activity, write your first draft on the separate paper your teacher has given you. Look back at your prewriting activity for ideas.

Writing Prompt

You read about a veterinarian resolving a problem with a cat. Think about a problem that many teenagers face today. Write a paper to share with your class in which you describe the problem and explain how it might be resolved.

Go On ►

Session 2 | Page 3

REVISED COPY

Directions

Now you have time to revise your draft. Reread your draft and think about the Writer's Checklist below. Check every box that makes a true statement about your draft.

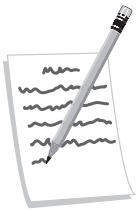
Writer's Checklist



- ☐ My paper has a beginning, a middle, and an end.
- ☐ My paper uses paragraphing appropriately.
- ☐ My paper flows smoothly from one idea to another.
- ☐ My paper stays on the topic.
- ☐ My paper includes details and examples.
- ☐ My paper uses precise and vivid language.
- ☐ My paper includes a variety of sentence structures.
- ☐ My paper includes correct grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

For every box you did not check, make the needed changes on your draft before you write your revised copy on Pages 5 through 9.

Please use ONLY a Number 2 pencil to write your revised copy.



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